



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
FACULTY OF MUSIC

In Recital: Vincent David, Distinguished Visitor in Music

Vincent David, saxophone; Wesley Shen, piano

November 3rd, 2022 at 7:30 pm | Walter Hall

PROGRAM

Rhapsodie (1901-1911)

Claude A. Debussy (1862-1918)
arr. Vincent David

L'éveil de la toupie (2018)

Vincent David (b. 1974)

Syrinx (1913)

Claude A. Debussy (1862-1918)

Réflexions (2022)

Vincent David (b. 1974)

Rhizome (2015)

Vincent David (b. 1974)

Linéal (2019)

Vincent David (b. 1974)

We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates.

For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit.

Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

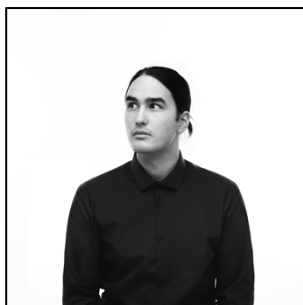


Vincent David is one of the most well-known saxophonist composers in the world due in part to his role in developing the musical abilities of his instrument. Having won three international awards during his studies, he is an accomplished musician. As a performer, he has created many new works such as *Dialogue de l'ombre double* by Pierre Boulez, *Troisième round* by Bruno Mantovani, and *Trame XIII* by Martin Matalon. In 2021, the French *Académie des Beaux arts* awarded him the “Interprétation” prize from the *Fondation Simone et Cino Del Duca - Institut de France*.

As a soloist, Vincent David has performed with various ensembles such as the *Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France*, the *Orchestre national du Capitole de Toulouse*, the *Orchestre national de Strasbourg*, the *Orchestre de la Suisse Romande*, the *Ensemble InterContemporain*, Helsinki's *Tapiola Sinfonietta* and *Philharmonic Orchestra*, Taiwan's *National Symphony Orchestra*, Stuttgart's *Philharmonic Orchestra*, Budapest's *MAV Orchestra*, Washington's *Navy Band Orchestra*, São Paulo's *Camerata Aberta*, Hannover's *Musica Assoluta*, the *Scottish Chamber Orchestra*, *TM+*, and *Court-Circuit*.

As a composer, he was awarded the 2021 *Grand Prix Lycéen des Compositeurs* for his piece *In Pulse*. While his first compositions were written for his own instrument, with solo pieces such as “Sillage” for soprano saxophone, “Pulse” and “Éclats d'échos” for alto saxophone, “Mirages” for soprano saxophone and piano, “Nuée Ardente” for alto saxophone and piano –which was commissioned by the *International Adolphe Sax* competition in Dinant–, and “l'éveil de la toupie”, he quickly began composing for orchestra with “Esquisses”, his concerti such as “Reflets” for alto saxophone and orchestra, “Arches” for soprano saxophone and orchestra, and “Rhizome” for alto saxophone and strings. His corpus also includes Jazz duets and quartets. His piece “Artéfact”, which was commissioned by the *Ensemble InterContemporain*, will be premiered in 2022.

Director of collections at the *Editions Billaudot*, Vincent David has given numerous master classes throughout the world. As a renowned pedagogue, he attaches great importance to sharing his experience and passion for music. A generous musician, he values artistic openness and promotes artistic curiosity in his classes. He currently teaches at the *Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles*.



Wesley Shen is a Toronto-based pianist and harpsichordist. He specializes in the performance of contemporary music, regularly commissioning and collaborating with composers to bring new works to life.

Programme Notes

Rhapsodie (1901-1911) - Claude A. Debussy

A pillar of the repertoire for saxophone, Debussy's "Rhapsodie" was commissioned at the turn of the century by an amateur saxophonist, Elise Hall, who was hoping to diversify the repertoire for her instrument. Debussy spent almost a decade on his manuscript, without ever achieving its composition. After his death in 1918, it is composer Jean Roger-Ducasse who wrote the missing measures of orchestral accompaniment and made it possible for the work to be created by saxophonist Pierre Mayeur and conductor André Caplet. With its tranquil and supple melody, this evocative work explores the instrument's timbre while being reminiscent of the rich colours found in Debussy's *La Mer*.

L'éveil de la toupie (2018) - Vincent David

In the form of a *valse musette*, "L'éveil de la toupie" (The awakening of the spinning top) offers a playful exploration of rhythm based on two ancient asymmetrical waltz structures in 3/3/2/3 and 3/3/3/2. With its lively tempo, this composition for alto saxophone and piano mirrors the whirling gesture of a spinning top whose increasing pace gives its meaning to the musical piece. The energy conveyed by its pulse ultimately culminates in an ode to rhythm itself.

Syrinx (1913) - Claude A. Debussy

Originally written for flute, "Syrinx" transports us to the fantasy world of Gabriel Mourey's adaptation of the Greek myth of *Psyché*. Debussy dedicated the score to flutist Louis Fleury who created it in 1913, and kept the performance exclusivity until his death in 1926. The ornate descending melodies, filled with the composer's beloved arabesques, are meant to be performed in the distance by the deity Pan while a nymph, who was until then hesitant, abandons herself to his intoxicating charms. Mourey later described *Syrinx* as a "true jewel of emotional restraint, of sadness, of beauty, of delicate tenderness, and of poetry".

Réflexions (2022) - Vincent David

The contemplative work "Réflexions" (Reflections) was written by Vincent David as an homage to the late saxophonist Hiroshi Hara, who passed away in 2019. From an initial musical gesture is born an elaborate exploration of echoes and timbre that is further developed by augmentation, and through the addition of polyphonic material and striking contrasts. "Réflexions" is a inner contemplation; the mirror of one's thoughts expressed through music.

Rhizome (2015) - Vincent David

In botany, a rhizome is an underground stem which continuously grows lateral shoots and aerial roots. Similarly, this musical work which was originally written for alto saxophone and strings uses a single note as its stem, from which emanates a vivacious music. The composer chose as E ♭ as the nucleus of this complex system since it is the referential note of the alto saxophone, a transposing instrument,

but also as an homage to Glazounov's famous concerto. From that central note, the musical material first extends to the peripheral notes of E and D, before expanding to the entire scope of the instrument. In this work, not only do the strings prolong the resonance of the soloist instrument but they also create a unique richness of sound.

Linéal (2019) - Vincent David

In the virtuosic "Linéal", Vincent David demonstrates the vast potential of his instrument. Written for the *concours* of the Conservatoire Royal de Bruxelles, this piece is at the intersection of various styles and influences. The major second interval found within the very first sound is at the core of the musical composition. Throughout the piece, this interval is projected in all registers, both vertically and horizontally, to create a linearity and continuity while also generating multiple colours and styles.
